THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir; the National Council for S&T Communication under this Ministry has the mandate for developing scientific temper among the people. Programmes and initiatives include training of communicators, developing communication modules, field programmes and research studies. Science-based NGOs are actively involved in different aspects of the programme including dissemination of explanation of natural phenomena like eclipses to reduce ignorance and fight superstitions. Print and electronic media are utilized in addition to interaction with the community through traditional folk forms.

Importance to pure science

2072. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have noted the concerns and fears that pure science is not being given adequate importance in India today;

(b) whether Government propose to remedy this decline;

(c) whether the establishment of Indian Institute of Science and Research all over the country will help;

(d) to what extent Government will give emphasis to creating a pool of researchers in science; and

(e) the steps proposed to create Science Centre of Excellence?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) The Government is aware of the concern that pure sciences are no longer attractive disciplines of study and attractive career options in Indian Society today despite considerable efforts by the Government. This is mainly because of other, more lucrative, career options available to the youth of today in other sectors of economy.

(b) to (c) The Government has been taking steps to arrest this decline all along. Right from the attractive Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojana scholarships at the School and College level to the Shyama Prasad

Mookerjee fellowships, Swarnajayanti fellowships, young scientist projects and awards, the JC Bose and Ramanujan fellowships—the Government has instituted several attractive schemes to attract meritorious students to a career in science. These are supplemented by relatively liberal research grants available today to active researchers. Through the FIST programme and by establishing research facilities and centres of excellence, the Government has also tried to make available competitive research infrastructure to our basic science researchers. The latest in this long series of promotional steps is the establishment of two Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) at Kolkata and Pune, respectively. while the country certainly needs more such institutions, it is equally important to raise the level of our large number of universities and colleges which fall into the domain of State Governments.

(d) and (e) The fellowship schemes and R&D funding schemes referred to above are already generating trained manpower and creating a pool of researchers in science. Also, as mentioned above, the Government has already created a number of centres of excellence in sciences and would continue to do so in future, as and when specific need is felt in any discipline for enhanced level of research infrastructure.

Progress in certain areas of technology

2073. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Indian research establishments have made very little progress in frontier areas of technology such as robotics, micro-electronics, nano-technology, super conductivity, fullerent, etc. despite spending huge amounts of money for research purposes;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the corrective steps taken during the last two years and proposed to be taken in the near future;

(c) whether it is also a fact that many research laboratories of CSIR are lacking in professional attitude; and

(d) if so, the corrective steps proposed to be taken in this rgard particularly to fix responsibility for failure in research advancement?